

By: Senator(s) Posey

To: Wildlife and Fisheries

SENATE BILL NO. 2659  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 59-21-81, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO REQUIRE PERSONS ON PERSONAL WATERCRAFT TO WEAR PERSONAL  
3 FLOTATION DEVICE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

5 SECTION 1. Section 59-21-81, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
6 amended as follows:

7 59-21-81. (1) Every vessel shall have on board a Coast  
8 Guard approved personal flotation device for each person aboard  
9 such vessel, and every person twelve (12) years or younger on  
10 board a motorboat, sailboat, or vessel which measures less than  
11 twenty-six (26) feet in length shall wear a type I, II, or III  
12 Coast Guard approved personal flotation device while such  
13 motorboat, sailboat, or vessel is underway. For the purpose of  
14 this section "underway" shall mean at all times except when a  
15 motorboat, sailboat, or vessel is anchored, moored, or aground.  
16 Every vessel shall have lights during the hours of darkness, which  
17 comply with all federal regulations applicable to vessels of its  
18 classification. Such vessel shall not be operated unless in a  
19 safe and seaworthy condition; the owner and operator shall employ  
20 such safety devices as may be necessary for the safe operation of  
21 such vessel, including an efficient natural or mechanical  
22 ventilating system when necessary for safe operation. In addition  
23 to the requirements imposed by this section, all vessels shall  
24 comply with all federal regulations applicable to vessels of such  
25 classification.

26 (2) For purposes of this subsection, "personal watercraft"  
27 means a vessel which uses an inboard motor powering a water jet

28 pump and which is designed to be operated by a person sitting,  
29 standing or kneeling on the vessel, rather than the conventional  
30 manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel. A person shall  
31 not operate a personal watercraft unless each person on board or  
32 being towed behind is wearing a type I, type II or type III,  
33 personal flotation device approved by the United States Coast  
34 Guard.

35 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
36 and after its passage.